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ABSTRACT

This elementary reader is one of a series produced by the Alaska Native Language Center. It contains eleven stories, written in six dialects of the Tanaina language, and is designed to be used either as reading exercises by native speakers of Tanaina who are learning to read and write their language, or as lessons in Tanaina language and culture for non-native speakers. The highly illustrated text is followed by a presentation of the Tanaina sound system. (CLK)

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DENA'INA T'QIT'ACH'

THE WAY THE TANAINAS ARE

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INTRODUCTION

These eleven narratives composed by speakers of the Tanaina language can be used either as reading exercises for native speakers of Tanaina who want to learn to read and write their language, or as lessons in the language and culture for those who do not speak Tanaina. This is the first book that contains stories from each of the Tanaina dialect areas. Four selections are from the Inland dialect of Nondalton, Lime Village and Pedro Bay; four are from the Outer Inlet dialect of Kenai; and three are from the Upper Inlet dialect of Susitna and Eklutna. The stories by Nick Balluta, Zenia Kolyaha, Nellie Chickalusion, Albert Wassillie, Peter Constantine, and Fedora Constantine were written at the first Tanaina language workshop, held in Dillingham in August of 1974. The narratives by the late Bertha Monfor, Fedosia Sacaloff, and Peter Kalifornsky were composed in Kenai in 1974. The one by Mike Alex was done at Eklutna in September 1974. Pete Bobby's story was done at the second Tanaina language workshop in Tyonek in October of 1974.

DENA'INA QENAGA K'EƛTEH QICH'TULNESHNI.

LET'S READ TANAINA.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
K'enkash Berry Pudding	by Bertha Monfor in the Kenai dialect	2
Aladi Htnelt'ists' How to Make Fried Bread	by Fedora Constantine in the Susitna dialect	4
Ve‡ Hnik'ghi‡'uyi ɬiq'a Barbecued Fish on a Stick	by Nick Balluta in the Nondalton dialect	6
Qunqelashi Quggi‡ The Spruce Root Snare	by Peter Constantine in the Kenai dialect	8
K'tl'ila Indian Potatoes	by Mike Alex in the Eklutna dialect	10
Heyteh Iqshak Ch'e‡'ani Winter Fishing	by Zenia Kolyaha in the Pedro Bay dialect	12
Yeghedishla Uquch'el'ani Black Bear Hunting	by Pete Bobby in the Lime Village dialect	14
Qunshi Uquch'el'ani Beluga Hunting	by Peter Kalifornsky in the Kenai dialect	16
San ɬiq'a Idayelghan Preparing Fish in Summer	by Nellie Chickalusion in the Susitna dialect	18
Unhsah Tahna'ina The First Russians	by Fedosia Sacaloff in the Kenai dialect	20
Ki‡ Ch'qinaghi‡nik'en The Stupid Boy	by Albert Wassillie in the Nondalton dialect	24

BERRY PUDDING

Pick berries and wash them and put a pot on the stove.

Pour in a little water and boil it.

Then add sugar and stir in flour.

Put the berries in.

Boil it a little.

Then you have made berry pudding.

Gega t'nɬ'an ch'u nunilah ch'u gudlik beldaq' dudinchit.

Miɬni betuniɬtl'it jetggwaq'u ch'u beɬ titninɬghech.

Yedahdi sahal betuniɬtl'it ch'u muga nuninɬba.

Ch'u gega tutghiɬtl'eɬ.

Jetggwaq'u titninɬghech.

Q'u k'enkash ziɬchin.

HOW TO MAKE FRIED BREAD

Put some flour into a mixing bowl.

Pour in some salt and stir in the salt.

Then put the frying pan on the fire.

Then put in some grease.

When it is hot, put in what you have mixed.

Then you will fry it.

Then you will eat it.

Ba nuk'enelbusi at buga datghiltl'el.

Nuti betutghinel ts'u

Nuti naghilbul.

Yethti sgulida desdghilggel.

Yethti ha ba tghiltl'el.

Dnilk'ugh daq'u nunelbuni baytghiltl'el.

Yedahti dnghilt'as.

Yethti dnghilqat.

BARBECUED FISH ON A STICK

I cut a flank from one side of the fish.

I made a cooking stick for it.

And I set the stick with the fish over the fire.

When it was cooked, we ate it all up.

Łiq'a vinuch'ida qizeIchin.

Chaggesh venuItu dazeIchin.

Ch'u veI nik'gheIggat.

Zt'a'i Ia suts'ulghel.

THE SPRUCE ROOT SNARE

Dig up a spruce root and make a snare.

Then tie that snare to the end of a long stick.

Hold the snare over the water.

Hold it over a fish.

Then pull it back.

Qunqelashi qunila ch'u quggiŁ niŁchi.

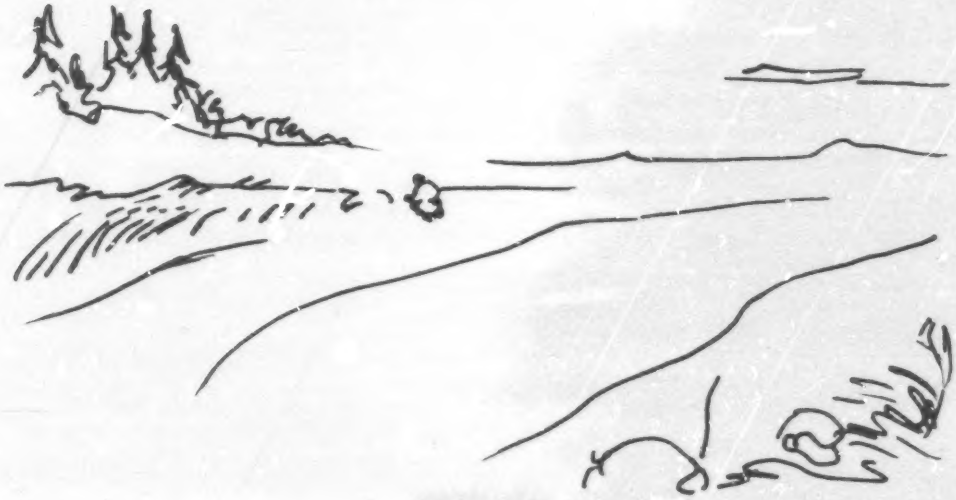
Yethdi quggiŁ ghini daghiŁnezi

chik'a kiyiq' qtghiyesh.

QuggiŁ ghini tanitighiŁdeŁ.

ŁuqŁa nuduytniŁdaŁ.

Yethdi naqatghiŁt'ch.



INDIAN POTATOES

Over there at the river flat Indian potato grows.

Go to the potatoes and dig some up.

Then bundle them.

And put spruce boughs in a hole.

And put in the potatoes.

Cover them up.

They are stored for winter.

Then you can dig them up and peel them.

Eat them raw or they're good roasted, too.

K'TL'ILA

Gudeh tl'uynu k'tl'ila qdilan.

K'tl'ila ghu tiyus ts'u quhdila.

Yethdi ndiɬghel.

Ts'u eɬ q'ah diɬdeɬ.

Ts'u k'tl'ila qidilas.

Qiɬ qanaqiniɬ.

Heyi nuɬtu niqidinlu.

Yethdi quqidilas ts'u diɬt'its'.

Ts'u det'ahi dilqat ts'uki dghit'a k'a yagheli.

WINTER FISHING

In the winter a young man made a hole in the ice with an icepick.

He threw some salmon eggs into the water.

He went back to the beach and gathered some wood.

He made a fire for the teapot.

He went back to the ice hole.

He dropped in his hook.

He caught some trout.

HEYTEH IHSHAK CH'EL'ANI

Heyteh ts'iltan kil cheghjil el ten qegh daniggat.

Q'in tunghiltuk'.

Tuvughh naqaniyu ch'u chik'a t'ghil'an.

Chaynik niltu nuydilq'un.

Q'esq'a qegh nu'iju.

Ve'ihshak'a qegh danilen.

Shagela chidghil'ik'.

BLACK BEAR HUNTING

When it gets cold, I'll go out for black bear.

When I come to the bear sitting in its den,

I'll kill it. After I kill it, I'll roast it.

I'll pack it back to my wife.

YEGHÆDISHLA UQUCH'EL'ANI

Ezhi qizdlanda yeghedishla uqu shtuntgheshyu.

Yeghedishla k''un qizduyi gheneshyuda hunuk'tghel*ta*l.

Hunuk'ghel*t*an yedahdi ghelt'as.

Sh'uch' nuk'tgheshdegha*l*.

BELUGA HUNTING

One time at the mouth of the Kenai River a beluga swam up to me.

And I shot it.

It floated up by me and I brought it back to shore.

The people came to me and we butchered it.

We dried its meat and we rendered its blubber into oil.

We poured the oil into containers.

We fastened the lids well.

It was for winter.

Ts'iɬq'a kahtnu betnu ughuzdlent qunshi shaghqughilagh.

Ch'u beɬ k'danɬtetl'.

Sha qutuyghiɬghel ch'u naqaneɬtan.

Quht'ana shaghnidatl' ch'u quch'dghilu.

Betsen ghinhdi ch'aghnaɬggen ch'u bediɬkidi ghinhdi ch'eɬkuch.

Tlegh ghinhdi dinunch'eznel.

Dukaq' ughesht'a ch'qiluq.

Heyi niɬtu.

PREPARING FISH IN THE SUMMER

I went down to the beach and I set out a net.

I caught some fish.

I took them out of the net.

I carried them back.

I cut them.

I made balik (salmon strips).

I put them in brine and soaked them.

I soaked them for half an hour.

Then I took them out.

I hung them up.

Then I built a fire under them.

I kept a fire under them until they were dry.

Then when they were dry, I ate them all up.

Tabaghh tsendesu ts'u tahbiƛ taneƛkits.

ƛiq'a sik' t'i'idatl'.

Neq' ts'ayinƛu.

Tunyelyu.

Ghest'uts'.

Balik nghesghun.

Biƛniƛat nuti tugheƛtƛ'it ts'u yi'at tugheƛdatl'.

K'eghun tsesihkugh ba tuyagheƛu.

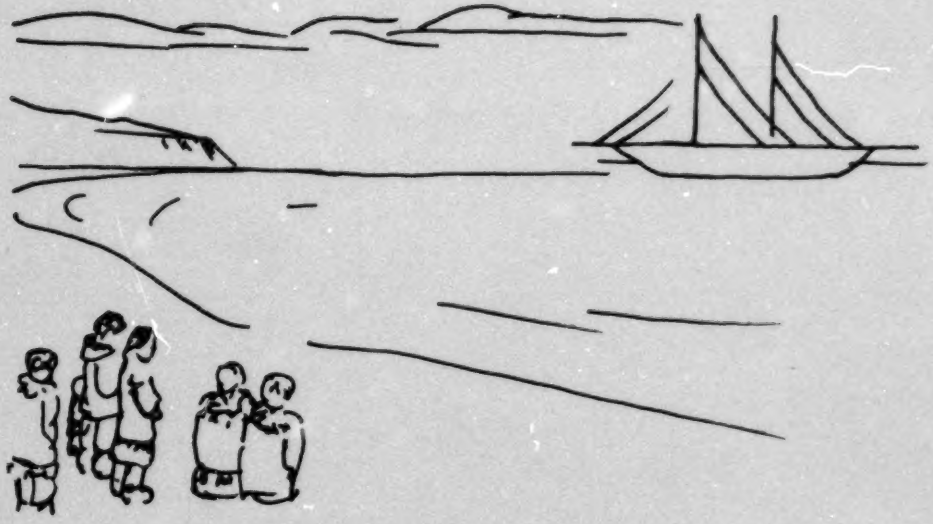
Yethti ba dayinƛdatl'.

Yudeh duyeƛu.

Yethti bet'ugh ideƛq'un.

Nughelggenqets' bet'ugh idaaƛq'en.

Yethti nalggen hnuq'u tsutngheltuk'.



THE FIRST RUSSIANS

The very first ship sailed into Kustatan.

When the Russian ship sailed in, everyone was afraid.

There was one man who never was afraid and he went out to the ship.

They picked him up together with his boat.

They dressed him up like a soldier.

They filled his boat with all kinds of things

and he brought them back.

And the Russians were called the 'Under Water People'.

UNHSAH TAHNA'INA

Unhsahgheli shlup Qezdaghenenh tults'et.

Tahna'ina shlup tults'etda ɬuq'u hqilnit.

Ts'ilt'an quht'ana hanq'u k'usht'a h'ilnil ch'u
shlup'a nuk'ughinik.

Baydalgi eɬ ts'iɬq'u daqighiɬtan.

Saldatinaq' qinunk'ghilu.

ɬuq'u niɬk'uch't'a qyudiqghilu ch'u naqank'dal'un.

Yethdi Tahna'ina hdghini.

After the Russians first came, there were needles.

These they learned to use quickly.

But they could not get used to the scissors.

They strung a rope through them and hung them around their necks.

At that time we also got different kinds of tools.

They also got guns.

They killed a dog with a gun.

One man, in order to see how the bullet comes out,

put his head to the gun.

Someone fired.

And the man was killed.

Unhsahgheli Tahna'ina tughaznik yethdi tl'inqin ghuduhdi.

Yeki ughasht'a qiq'inidulnen.

Nuzhnich yethdi k'usht'a qiq'inidilnil.

Tl'iɬ qyaninggezh ch'u qiɬ nutsan k'nalyu qeyeluq.

Qiɬ ghetnuyi niɬk'uch' yethdi shughu nak'qizdlant'i.

Izin k'u qwa qizdlan.

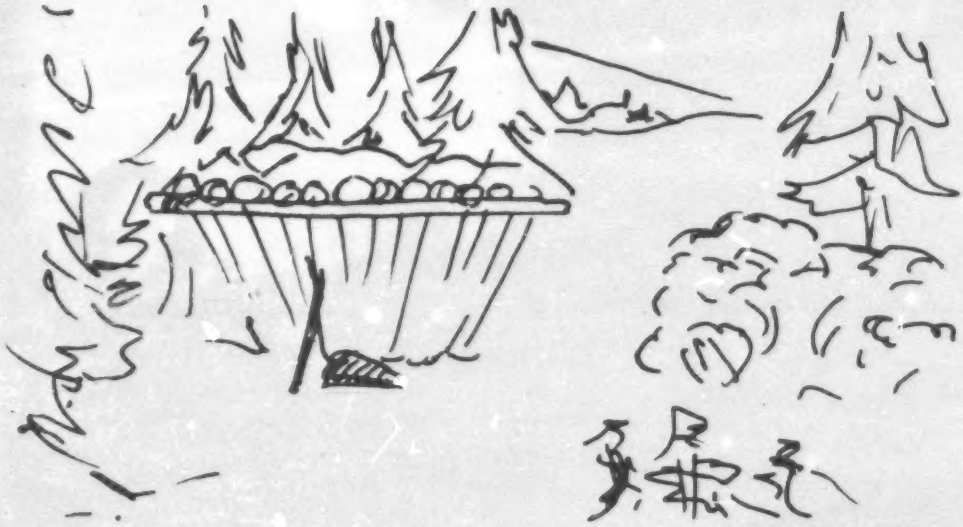
Ɬik'a qiɬ chiɬyuq.

Ts'iɬt'an quht'ana ɑich'anulchiɬi ghuda yetnul'ani

ghuda ya nitsaniyel.

Yedaɬtetl'.

Yetq'u quhtana qiɬ chiɬyuq.



THE STUPID BOY

One man went out in the woods with his wife and his nephew.

That boy was stupid.

His uncle would teach him things but he never learned.

He built a deadfall trap.

Everyday they would check it, but nothing was killed.

One morning the boy said, "Uncle, let me check the trap."

"Yes," the uncle said.

"If nothing is trapped, what should I do?"

The uncle said, "You just pull that bait."

KIL CH'QINAGHILNIK'EN

Ts'iLt'an qut'an tutazyu ve'u eLa vuzha k'u qilan.

Yen kiL ghunhdi ch'qinaghiLnik'.

Vez'a gun yeqeLdih hq'u nch'u qeldik.

Vez'a gun aL nini'un.

Nuytelquxch'q'u nuqinel'ih hq'u nch'u chik'deLnil.

Kiq'u q'ut'un kiL gun, "Zhala, aL ghin nunghel'anni."

"Aa'," yeLni.

"Nch'u va k'iLkeLda nda'ich'q'u tgheshliL?"

Vez'a gun, "Nt'i aLchen ghini va tghicheL," yeLni.

The boy went out and he came to the trap.

He took the bait and he pulled it.

He killed himself.

It got dark.

The boy didn't return.

The aunt said, "What happened to him?"

The next day she went out.

When she got to the trap, she saw his feet sticking out.

After she took apart the trap,

she took the boy and threw him down the bank.

"Your stupidity killed you," she said.

Kiɬ gun yeh tɨzyu ch'u aɬ ghini yegh nu'idyu.

Aɬchen ghini yeghetneq ch'u yanichet.

Udiq'u chihudalyuq.

Va nughiɬghatl'.

Nch'u nu'idyul.

Vach'ala gun "nda eɬ dinindin?" yeɬni.

Taɬqun idi'eɬ yeh nutasdyu.

Aɬ ghini yegh nu'idyu iɬa yet'ich'endal'ats.

Aɬ ghini yedeghidghiluha kiɬ gun yeghetneq ch'u chench'
yih ch'iyeɬt'eq'.

"Nch'qinaghiɬnik'a shughu chindaɬyuggi," yeɬni.

THE TANAINA ALPHABET

Vowels

a	aɬ	'trap'	i	ni	'island'
e	neɬ	'wedge'	u	ush	'snowshoe'

Consonants

b	ben	'lake'	n	nuti	'salt'
ch	chuɬ	'Chinook wind'	q	qil	'it's no good'
ch'	ch'da	'blanket'	q'	q'in	'salmon eggs'
d	diɬ	'dust'	s	seɬ	'moccasins'
dl	dlin'a	'mouse'	sh	shani	'summer'
dz	k'kidza	'fur pelt, feathers	t	ten	'ice'
			t'	t'ash	'charcoal'
g	gega	'berry'	tl	tlegh	'oil'
gg	ggagga	'brown bear'	tl'	tl'iɬ	'rope'
gh	ghin'i	'maggots'	ts	betsen	'his flesh'
h	haɬ	'pack'	ts'	ts'ah	'thread'
hh	hhuk	'hurry!'	v	ven	'lake'
j	jah	'pitch'	x	sax	'wart'
k	ken	'flat'	y	yuyan	'universe, heavens'
k'	k'etnu	'river'	y	suy	'sand'
l	luts'egh	'ring'	z	izin	'gun'
ɬ	ɬik'a	'dog'	zh	k'ghazha	'egg'
m	dem	'fly'	'	Dena'ina	'Tanaina people'

Nondalton, Lime Village, and Pedro Bay use the letter v, and Kenai, Tyonek and Eklutna use b. The Upper Inlet dialect of Eklutna, Knik, Susitna, and Tyonek has seven fewer consonants than the other Tanaina dialects: in Upper Inlet sh and x become s; y, z, and zh become y; ch' becomes ts'; and j becomes dz.

These Tanaina sounds form a system, which can be displayed:

b	d	dl	dz	(j)	g	gg	'
	t	tl	ts	(ch)	k	q	
	t'	tl'	ts'	(ch')	k'	q'	
		ɬ	s	(sh)	x	h	hh
v		l	(z)	(zh)	(y)	gh	
m	n			y			

The consonants in parentheses ( ) are the seven not in Upper Inlet Tanaina.